BRITISH COLUMBIA
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BC Stats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 10-35 September 3rd, 2010

- **Labour income growth slows in second quarter**
- **Business investment in residential structures up 2.1% in second quarter**
- **Tourism sector shrinks 2.4% in 2009**

The Economy

- **Wages, salaries and benefits earned by BC workers increased 0.6% (*seasonally adjusted*) in the first quarter.** The increase was only half the national average (+1.2%), and lower than in any other province. Alberta and Yukon (both at +2.0%) led the regions in terms of labour income growth. In the rest of Canada, increases ranged from +0.9% in PEI to +1.5% in Manitoba.

  Labour income in the province stalled early in the quarter, but began to pick up momentum in June, expanding 0.7%. Without this boost, labour income growth in the province would have been flat in the second quarter.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **BC business investment in residential structures rose 2.1% (seasonally adjusted) in the second quarter.** This was well below the robust growth rates seen earlier in the recovery (spending was up 5.9% in late 2009, and increased 7.7% in the first quarter of 2010).

  The second quarter growth was largely due to investment in new buildings (+9.5%). Spending on conversions of existing dwellings, and other costs such as legal fees associated with the transfer of ownership, fell.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Sawmills and planing mills in the province produced 16.3% more lumber this June than in the same month last year.** Mills on the Coast ramped up their output by 32.2%, while production at Interior mills was also up substantially (+14.4%). Canadian lumber production increased 23.3%, as BC and Quebec (+54.3%) posted strong gains.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

Tourism

- **British Columbia's tourism sector shrank 2.4% (measured in constant 2002 dollars) in 2009, marking the largest decline in the sector's GDP since 1997 (the first year for which comparable figures are available).** The drop in GDP was comparable to the 2.3% contraction in BC's economy during the year. Revenues generated through tourism activities plunged 5.8% to $12.7 billion (current dollars) and tourism employment fell 2.1%, to 128,600. The accommodation and food services industry, a key player in BC's tourism sector, saw a 3.2% decline in employment during 2009. *Data Source: BC Stats*

- **Room revenues in the province remained flat (0.0%, *seasonally adjusted*) in May, but Mainland/Southwest (+1.8%) posted its first increase since the Olympics.** Revenues also rose in Nechako (+10.7%) and Northeast (+9.0%) but softened in Vancouver Island/Coast (-3.2%), Thompson/ Okanagan (-0.5%), Kootenay (-4.3%), Cariboo (-6.3%) and North Coast (-22.1%). *Data Source: BC Stats*

- **Food services and drinking places in the province saw revenues slip (-0.3%, *seasonally adjusted*) in June, partially offsetting the growth recorded in the previous month (+0.6%).** Drinking places took in substantially more (+4.1%), but food service establishments had a less lucrative month (-0.9%).

  Sales at Canadian establishments held steady (+0.3%), with revenues down most notably at special food service establishments (+2.3%) and drinking places (+1.5%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

Public sector employment

- **During the second quarter, there were an average of 91 public sector workers employed for every 1,000 residents of the province.** British Columbia's public sector employment rate,

Report What influences voting behavior?

Did you know...

Worldwide, the equivalent of almost 27,000 trees are flushed away every day by toilet paper users *Data Source: National Geographic Green Guide*

which was unchanged from the first quarter, has been the lowest in the country for more than a year. Alberta (with 94 employees per 1,000 population) had the second-lowest public sector employment rate, followed by Ontario (102). The national average was 108 workers per 1,000 population.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **In BC, health and social services institutions employ the largest number of workers (23 per 1,000 population), while local school boards (18), municipal general governments (14) and public post-secondary institutions (11) are also key employers.** Although more people work in federal general government (41,300) than in provincial government ministries and agencies (39,400), the employment rate is similar, at 9 workers per 1,000 population. Another 7 workers per 1,000 population are employed by government business enterprises.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

General government includes those directly employed in government ministries as well as workers in agencies such as WorkSafe BC, which are controlled or funded by government.

Radio Broadcasting

- **The 106 private radio broadcasters in BC and the Territories had a less profitable year in 2009.** Total operating expenses climbed (+0.8%), while diminishing sales of air time to generate advertising revenue (-6.2%) pushed operating revenue down (-7.8%), slightly more the Canadian average (-5.2%). In fact, broadcasters in the province registered their worst profit margin before interest and taxes in the last five years.

  Nationally, the highest profit margins were garnered by English radio stations (+19.0%), followed by French (+14.8%) and other language (+5.4%) stations. Radio stations that operate on the FM radio band enjoyed a substantially higher profit margin than AM stations last year. The economic downturn that began in 2008 had a significant impact on Canadian private broadcasters, manifested most notably by widespread declines in advertising revenues from most commercial industries.

Data Source: SC, Catalogue 56-208-X

The Nation

- **The Canadian economy expanded (+0.5%, seasonally adjusted) in the second quarter, but growth was well below the levels seen earlier in the year (+1.4%).** Consumer (+0.7%) and government (+0.4%) spending continued to rise, but at a slower rate than earlier in the year. Business investment in fixed capital advanced 2.2%, largely because of increased spending on machinery and equipment (+6.7%). Investment in new housing (+0.3%) and other structures (+0.3%) rose only modestly. Total final demand for goods and services remained robust, rising 0.9%. This contributed to a 3.9% increase in spending on imported goods and services. However, foreign purchases of Canadian products were up just 0.5%, and an expanding trade deficit contributed to slower GDP growth in the second quarter. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Canadian manufacturers' prices were 1.0% higher this July than in the same month last year due largely due to rising prices for primary metal products (+9.4%) and petroleum and coal products (+7.5%).** Excluding petroleum & coal, the overall index would have been up just 0.3%. On the other hand, the depreciation of the Canadian dollar boosted producer prices. Excluding the exchange rate effect, they would have climbed 2.8% (rather than 1.0%) over the twelve month period.

  BC softwood lumber prices slipped (-0.9%) with Interior (-1.2%) producers receiving slightly less for their products than in July of last year, while those at Coastal mills received the same amount (+0.0%). On the other hand, prices for BC pulpwood chips were substantially higher (+4.7%).

  The cost of raw materials increased 6.0% in July, following a flat month in June. This was mostly the result of a 7.9% price boost for mineral fuels. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

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What influences voting behaviour? Analysis of the 2009 B.C. General Election

Across established democracies, the proportion of citizens who turn out to vote has been on a steady decline since the 1960s. British Columbia is no exception. In 1983, 71% of registered voters cast ballots in the provincial election, but since then the turnout rate in B.C. has fallen. Only 55% of the 2.9 million registered voters cast a ballot in the May 2009 general election.[1]

Following the 2009 provincial election, BC Stats undertook two research projects designed to explore the differences between those individuals who voted, and those who didn't. The first looked at demographic differences, while the second examined attitudes.

WHO HEADS TO THE POLLS?

Following the 2009 B.C. general election, BC Stats examined voter turnout rates along a variety of demographic dimensions. The first part of the analysis examined the voting patterns through time, by age group.

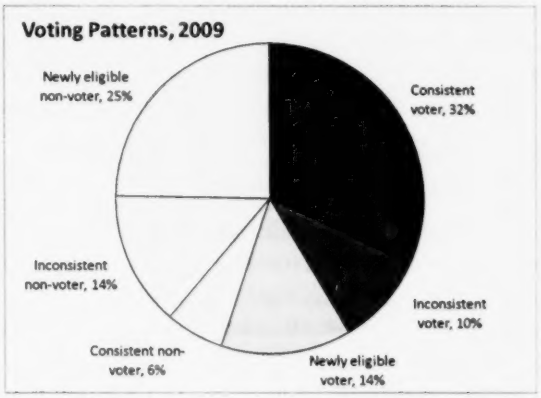
Returning to the polls...

Of the 2.9 million registered voters for the 2009 British Columbia general election, one-third are consistent voters. That is, they cast ballots in the 2001, 2005, and 2009 general elections.

Their polar opposites, consistent non-voters (registered in all three elections but voted in none), make up only 6% of the registered voters.

The remainder of voters—people who cast ballots in 2009—were split between inconsistent voters (10%), and newly eligible voters[2] (14%).

The inconsistent non-voters made up 14% of the electorate, while newly eligible non-voters accounted for a quarter of the total.



...depends on age

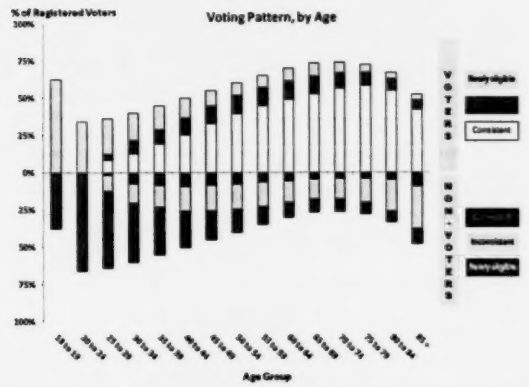
Three-quarters (74%) of the registered voters aged 70-74 cast a ballot in the 2009 general election, the largest proportion of any age cohort. Each successively younger age group had fewer registered voters actually voting than the next older group - only one-third (34%) of the 20-24 year old group cast a ballot in the three elections.

The exception to the "younger people don't vote" trend was the 18 and 19 year old cohort. Three out of every five registered voters in this age group cast a ballot. However, this may be an artifact of the voter registration process - most of these individuals may have had to consciously make an effort to register, unlike older individuals who would already be on the voters list.

A similar pattern applies for consistent voters. Over half (58%) of registered voters aged 75-79 cast a ballot in the 2009 general election. Each successively younger age group had fewer consistent voters than the next older group - only 13% of the 30-34 year old group (all of whom

[1] It should be noted that not all individuals who are eligible to vote register; this report deals only with registered voters.

[2] A complete description of the voter profiles is included at the end of this report.



were old enough to vote in all three elections) cast a ballot in the three elections.

Examining demographic predictors of voter turnout

Following the 2009 B.C. general election, BC Stats examined voter turnout rates at the neighbourhood[3] level, comparing them with a variety of demographic characteristics of the neighbourhood.

Voter turnout is related to eight characteristics

The demographic study found that eight demographic characteristics are related to voter turnout. It was found that neighbourhoods that were most likely to vote had:

- higher median income,
- larger proportions of older individuals, and
- a greater proportion of university educated citizens.

Neighbourhoods with lower turnout rates had:

- higher proportions of individuals moving into the neighbourhood from other parts of B.C. or Canada,
- greater proportions of recent immigrants to Canada,
- a higher unemployment rate, and
- a larger fraction of the population not in the workforce and with children at home.

In addition, the study also identified that the more competitive the campaign race in an electoral district[4], the higher the voter turnout for the neighbourhoods falling within that electoral district.

Other demographic factors

The analysis shows that these factors predict voting behaviour to differing degrees when controlling for other factors. That is to say, the factors don't apply equally, depending on the other characteristics of the neighbourhood.

For example, in those electoral districts where the incumbent was not re-elected, only three factors predict turnout: the closeness of the race, income, and the proportion of recent immigrants to Canada (external migrants).

For the youngest 10% of census tracts[5], only two factors predict turnout rate: the proportion of internal migrants (people who moved from other parts of B.C. or Canada) and the proportion of people not in the workforce and with children at home. As these two characteristics increase, voter turnout decreases.

Other characteristics tested were population density and the proportion of new and established immigrants to Canada. For those neighbourhoods with a fast growing immigrant population, higher voter turnout is associated with higher median incomes and smaller proportions of people who have moved into the census tract from both outside and inside Canada.

[3] Neighbourhoods are defined for the purposes of this study as a Census Tract within a Census Metropolitan Area. The demographic data used for this analysis was drawn from the 2006 Census of Canada.

[4] Based on the difference in the percentage of the popular vote between the first and second place candidates.

[5] Determined by the average age of all registered voters in the census tract.

The paradox

Many of these findings present a paradox. Since the 1960s, when declining turnout rates were first noted, many of these socio-demographic characteristics have moved in the direction that would suggest higher voter turnout. For example, a greater proportion of British Columbians possess a university education. The conclusion to be drawn is that although socio-demographic factors explain the differences in turnout in a single election, they do not explain the long-term trend of declining turnout rates.

MOTIVATIONS & BARRIERS

Following the 2009 provincial election, BC Stats conducted a survey and asked a variety of questions about attitudes and behaviours related to voting. Individuals were asked if they voted in 2009 and also if they voted in 2005.

The majority intend to vote in 2013

Even among voters who had voted in 2005 but not in 2009, the majority of respondents reported that they would likely[6] vote in the next election (68% of 2005-only voters). When asked about future voting behaviour, individuals who had not voted in either 2005 or 2009 were the only group wherein a large proportion (46%) indicated that it was *unlikely* that they would vote in the next provincial election.

Interest in the 2009 election was low, even among voters

Compared to the other attitudinal questions that were asked in the survey, interest in the 2009 provincial election was low among all eligible voters – even individuals who had voted in both 2005 and 2009. Nearly one-quarter of that group indicated that they were either not interested or neutral about the most recent provincial election. Compared to this low interest in the provincial election (51%), interest in what is going on in politics was greater (63%) for all eligible voters regardless of voting behaviour.

Knowledge of the process is not a major barrier

The majority of all eligible voters agree with the statements, "I know what I need to do to vote in a provincial election" and "voting is easy". As well, only 16% of the comments provided by respondents who didn't vote in the 2009 election in response to the question, "What was the main reason you did not vote during the May 12th provincial election" included knowledge as the reason. Within the theme of knowledge, the majority of comments referred to a lack of knowledge about political parties and platforms rather than the process of voting. Knowledge is a more common barrier to voting among younger respondents (under 34 years of age) than older respondents.

Non-voters may be receiving inaccurate information about elections

The Elections BC website is a common source of information for individuals who had voted in both 2005 and 2009. Those who didn't vote in the most recent election are more likely to have received their information about the election from *other* internet sources. This may have influenced the quality and accuracy of the information that these non-voters received.

Personal circumstances are a temporary barrier and engagement is a consistent barrier

Respondents who didn't vote in the 2009 election gave two main reasons for not voting in the most recent election: personal circumstances and engagement. Comments from 2005-only voters were twice as likely as those from individuals who had not voted in either 2005 or 2009 to suggest personal circumstances were their main reason for not voting. On the other hand, responses from individuals who had not voted in either 2005 or 2009 were far more likely to indicate that

[6] These are respondents who answered either "5-Very likely" or "4" when asked, "based on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "not at all likely" and 5 is "very likely" what is the likelihood that you will vote in the next provincial general election scheduled for May 2013?"

engagement was the main barrier compared to comments from 2005-only voters.

Repeat voters cast ballots for a variety of reasons; 2009-only voters care about the issues

Compared to individuals who had voted in both 2005 and 2009, more comments from 2009-only voters expressed issue-based reasons for voting; nearly half of the responses from this group indicated that it was particular issues raised in the campaign that motivated them to vote, compared to less than 40% of comments from individuals who had voted in both 2005 and 2009.

CLEAR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN VOTERS AND NON-VOTERS

This research points to the fact that there are discernable differences between voters and non-voters. A number of demographic factors are associated with voter turnout, including income, education, and age. Individual attitudes are also associated with voting behaviour, and include interest in the current election, and knowledge of political parties and platforms.

For more information, please refer to the detailed analytic reports prepared by BC Stats:

Motivations and Barriers: Exploring Voting Behaviour in British Columbia (BC Stats, 2010)

Who Heads to the Polls? Exploring the Demographics of Voters in British Columbia (BC Stats, 2010)

Voter Profiles

PROFILE	2009	2005	2001
Consistent voter	Yes	Yes	Yes
Inconsistent voter	Yes	Eligible since 2001 but not voting in either 2001 or 2005	
Newly eligible voter	Yes	Did or did not vote, or was not registered	Not registered
Consistent non-voter	No	Yes	Yes
Inconsistent non-voter	No	Eligible since 2001 but not voting in either 2001 or 2005	
Newly eligible non-voter	No	Did or did not vote, or was not registered	Not registered

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also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca or choose RSS

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/2010	% change on one year ago
BC	4,510.9	1.6
Canada	34,019.0	1.2
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 9)		
(BC - at market prices)	2008	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	197,931	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	164,520	0.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	37,529	-1.7
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	25,931	3.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Jun 2010	3,007	2.1
Merchandise Exports - Jun 2010	2,506	2.6
Retail Sales - Jun 2010	4,830	-0.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Jul 2010)	one year ago	% change
BC	2.0	0.3
Vancouver	2.5	0.6
Victoria	1.4	0.2
Canada	1.8	1.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Jul 2010	prev. month
Jobs Created (Lost) - BC NEW	16.3	
Labour Force - BC	2,503.0	0.4
Employed - BC	2,315.2	0.7
Unemployed - BC	187.9	-3.3
		Jun 2010
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.5	7.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.0	7.9
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Sep 1/2010	Sep 2/2009
Prime Business Rate	2.75	2.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.30	3.75
- 5 year	5.39	5.85
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Sep 1/2010	Sep 2/2009
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0497	1.1065
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9527	0.9051
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jul 2010	one year ago
BC	824.70	4.5
Canada	818.60	2.1

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Open Data

Most data products on our site have long been available PDF format, which behaves nicely for printing but resists extraction of imbedded information. Over the past year most updates to our site have included both PDF and a more open format such as CSV or XLS. We are now revisiting our archive of about12,000 PDF files and producing matching open format versions. Our entire 2006 Census collection is now available in both PDF and XLS. Look for continued progress through the early Fall.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/dd/profiles.asp

Labour Force Participation Rate Projections

The model uses an entry-exit rate methodology to project age/sex-specific participation rates by age cohort—i.e., people of the same generation—for the period 2010–2036. This approach, which was pioneered by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, takes into account the wide differences in participation among cohorts and generates projections that are more plausible than the alternative age group extrapolation approach.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/labour.asp#pubs

PEOPLE 35 Pop Projection Highlights

PEOPLE 35 (Population Extrapolation for Organizational Planning with Less Error) population projections are now available. This latest population projection covers the period 2010 to 2036, with information available for numerous provincial geographies including Local Health Area, Health Service Delivery Area, Health Authority, School District, College Region, Regional District and Development Region. Access the release article 2036 BC, which provides some PEOPLE35 highlights, or view projection details on our website (total population) or through the webstore (details age/sex projection packages).

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/popproj.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Tourism Sector Monitor, August 2010

Next week

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 2nd Quarter 2010
- Exports, July 2010
- Labour Force Statistics, August 2010
- Earnings & Employment Trends, August 2010

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